Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

Media Contact: Rex Hackler: 406-247-7943
For Immediate Release: June 25, 1999
Print PDF

Today in Billings, Montana the Bureau of Indian Affairs unveiled the Trust Assets Accounting Management System. Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt hit the switch that officially started the pilot project of TAAMS. The program designed by the Trust management employees of the BIA and implemented by Applied Terra Vision, Artesia Systems Group, worked perfectly.

Secretary Babbitt, clearly impressed by the new Trust management tool, remarked, "This is the first step toward a trust management system that works for the Tribes and for the individuals across the Indian country." Babbitt praised the employees of the Bureau of Indian Affairs as the creative force behind the system design. "I knew the people of the BIA would come through and they did. I knew they could do it."

The TAAMS system Will enable the Bureau of Indian Affairs to keep accurate Indian land records, distribute trust income to individuals, send notices to individuals regarding the leasing of their land, automatically record accounts receivable, certified title status reports, and a myriad of other functions.

Assistant Secretary Kevin Gover said, "This system is state of the art, and it has been designed by those who know exactly what the Trust Management System needs to do for Tribes and individuals." Gover gave credit to the Congressional appropriators for funding the system to Secretary Babbitt for his leadership, but mostly to the employees of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. "These people worked the long hours, and they have proven that given the resources, they can fix this system. The American Indian employees of the Bureau of Indian Affairs are the true heroes of the day."

David Orr, President of Artesia System Group, the contractor for the system echoed that sentiment. "Our company implemented the system designed by the BIA employees. They are the experts on what this system should be, and they are the people who are making this system work. I have never se.en a group of people more committed to making a project work that the people of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, they have been a joy and an inspiration."

Gover went on to say, "Nobody want the Trust Fund Management system fixed more that the American Indians who make up the BIA. They know this system affects their tribes, their communities, and their families.

The TAAMS system will now undergo a 60-day series of tests and the testing of the application in every possible situation. Dom Nessi, the TAAMS project manager for the BIA stated, "We are now going to put this system through its paces. This system looks very good now, but our people are certain we can make it even better in the next two months. We are on the way to having the best land management system in the Nation." Because the TAAMS system is a modified Commercial Off the Shelf software system (COTS) changes and adaptations can be made quickly and easily. During the testing and data cleanup period in the Billings Area Office, if changes are necessary, they will be made to make the system work even better.

"This is a huge step toward creating the first working Trust Management System for Tribal and

Individual accounts", stated Assistant Secretary Kevin Gover, "We did not break this system, but we are going to fix it. This is a case of Indians solving an Indian problem created by neglect."
